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DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/12/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: JORDAN: REPORTS OF SOF DEPLOYMENTS TO YEMEN
UNFOUNDED

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (S/NF) SUMMARY: Jordanian online news services reported on November 12 the GOJ's denial that it had sent 450 Special Operations Forces (SOF) to fight Huthi rebels in Yemen alongside Saudi forces. The reports cite allegations by the Baghdad-based pro-Shia Nahrainnet service. In recent months, the Embassy has facilitated Jordanian military assistance to Yemen, including contributions of military equipment and several SOF trainers. The Jordanian articles represent a rare instance of reporting on Jordan's Armed Forces by a national media which typically steers clear of security issues. END SUMMARY.

12. (S/NF) Two Jordanian online news services -- Ammonnews and Jisara -- reported that unnamed sources in the GOJ denied reports that it had sent SOF to participate in Saudi military operations against the Huthi rebels along the Saudi-Yemeni border, and planned to send additional troops within a week. The reports cite allegations by the Baghdad-based pro-shia website Nahrainnet which quotes Jordan's King Abdullah II telling Saudi Arabia's King Abdulla, "Jordan offers all its potential military and intelligence to help Saudi Arabia in its war (against the Huthi) as it is a war on Jordan," in a telephone conversation on November 9.

13. (S/NF) Jordan has maintained a keen interest in the Huthi uprising in Yemen and in the Yemeni government's ability to maintain internal security and ensure no safe-haven for terrorist groups. As a result, in September Jordan sent 25 M113 armored personnel carriers, 50 Rattels, and 4 AARDVARK mine-sweeping vehicles to Yemen. The contribution was funded by the UAE and facilitated by the Embassy. Jordan has also sent several trainers from its SOF units to provide technical assistance to the Yemeni Armed Forces on special operations and counter-terrorism operations. In addition, JAF Major General Jamal Shawabkeh, former head of Jordan's Special Operations Command, is serving on an extended detail as the Yemeni president's special advisor for Counter-Terrorism.

14. (S/NF) COMMENT: So far the story has not been picked up by mainstream print or broadcast outlets, and is unlikely to be re-reported. A survey conducted by the Center for Defending the Freedom of Journalists in My 2009 indicated that at least 94 per cent of Jordanian journalists practice self-censorship on military and security subjects. The reports as carried by Jordanian media represent a rare step into the field of military and security reporting. END COMMENT.)
Beecroft